

RESCUINGAnimals
FROM
DISASTERS

SAVING ANIMALS AFTER TORNADOES



by Stephen Person

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by **Stephen Person**

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Mason Versus the Tornado

A young dog named Mason knew he was in serious danger. The date was April 27, 2011, and a powerful **tornado** was ripping through North Smithfield, a **suburb** of Birmingham, Alabama. Mason hid from the storm inside the garage of his family's home. Suddenly, the wind tore off the garage door. Mason was sucked outside and swept high into the air!

Tornadoes reach from thunderstorm clouds all the way down to the ground.

Tornadoes are among the most powerful storms in nature. They are violent swirling columns of air, with winds that can top 200 miles per hour (322 kph). Tornadoes usually move along the ground at about 30 miles per hour (48 kph) but can reach speeds up to 70 miles per hour (113 kph).

The tornado slammed Mason down to the ground far from his home. He tried to stand, but the bones in both of his front legs were broken. Unable to walk, Mason began crawling toward home, pushing his body forward with his **hind legs**. Without help, Mason would not survive.



Like Mason, this dog was separated from its owner when the tornado hit Alabama.

Rescued at Last

Mason's owners survived the storm, though their house was badly damaged. When the tornado passed, they went outside to look for Mason. He was nowhere in sight. After days of searching, the family gave up. They were sure they would never see their dog again. Then one day, about two and a half weeks later, the family got a big surprise. There, sitting on the porch, was Mason. He had gone so long without food he was down to just half his normal weight. Yet the little dog had still managed to crawl all the way home!

Tornadoes destroyed homes all over Birmingham, Alabama, on April 27, 2011.



The family rushed Mason to an animal hospital. A **veterinarian** named Bill Lamb and two other animal doctors worked on Mason for three and a half hours. They had to put two metal plates and 17 screws in Mason's legs to help them heal. The hard work paid off—Mason was soon able to begin walking again.



Mason became famous when his story appeared in newspapers and on television. People **donated** money to help Mason's family pay the dog's medical bills.

Mason standing on his bandaged legs after veterinarians fixed them

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephen Person has written many children's books about history, science, and the environment. He lives with his family in Saratoga Springs, New York.

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FROM DISASTERS

SAVING ANIMALS AFTER TORNADOES

When disaster strikes, people aren't the only ones in danger. On April 27, 2011, a powerful tornado was ripping through Alabama. A young dog named Mason was swept high into the air before being slammed back down to the ground. He tried to stand, but the bones in both of his front legs were broken. Who would come to his rescue?

Look inside to meet the everyday heroes who have found ways to save animals from tornadoes. These brave men and women are able to rescue not only injured dogs but also cats, horses, and birds—sometimes risking their own lives as they rush in to help.

SAVING ANIMALS AFTER
EARTHQUAKES

SAVING ANIMALS FROM
FIRES

SAVING ANIMALS AFTER
FLOODS

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